



## **GENERAL QUESTIONS**

- 1) What would AOT consider as an appropriate funding match?**
  - a) Cash, In-Kind, and Third-Party Contributions.
- 2) Will the VAI Grants be awarded all at once or in stages?**
  - a) The VAI Partnership Grant will be awarded in two tranches of funding.
    - i) 1st Tranche will be awarded on or before September 30, 2021.
    - ii) 2nd Tranche will be awarded in early 2022.
  - b) The VAI Marketing Grant will be awarded in two tranches of funding.
    - i) 1st Tranche will be awarded on or before October 15, 2021.
    - ii) 2nd Tranche will be awarded in early 2022.
  - c) The VAI Outdoor Rec Grant will be awarded on or before October 15, 2021. Any remaining funds will compile a 2nd Tranche of funding in early 2022.
  - d) The VAI Legacy Golf Course Grant will be a rolling grant award process.
- 3) Can matching funds for the VAI Grants come from other AOT programs like Prop 302 or Rural Co-op Marketing?**
  - a) No, matching funds may not come from other AOT programs.
- 4) Can local tribal governments apply for VAI Grants Funding?**
  - a) Yes, local tribal governments may apply for VAI Grants Funding, but a VAI Grant will not be awarded to an entity that is receiving funding from the AOT or federal source for the same tactic.
- 5) What are the reporting requirements?**
  - a) AOT is continuing its work with the State of Arizona's Grant Department on what these reporting requirements will be. More information will be available to those who are awarded.
- 6) Who makes the grant award decisions?**
  - a) AOT has put together grant review panels for each VAI grant. Each grant will be reviewed using a rubric. Depending on the grant review panel score, AOT will provide an award update notification on the entity's application status after 30 days of the close of the application.
- 7) Are media/advertising entities eligible to apply for VAI Grants?**
  - a) No, media/advertising entities are not eligible to apply for VAI Grants, but could be a vendor included in an eligible applicant's grant.



- 8) As a private entity, does a VAI Grant application require partnership with a DMO?**
- a) VAI Partnership Grant & VAI Outdoor Rec Revitalization Grant - No, the private entity can apply on their own.
  - b) VAI Marketing Grant - Yes, the private entity needs to work with the DMO to be included in their application's scope of work.
- 9) My community has a few items we are working on applying for and the VAI materials mention geographically diverse grants will be taken into consideration. Does my community need to coordinate our grant applications?**
- a) We will consider grant applications statewide to ensure even distribution across counties and we encourage you to work with your community partners to coordinate the most impactful applications. Competitive applications from regional or community partnership will be prioritized.
- 10) Are other entities of the state eligible to apply for VAI Grant funding?**
- a) No, other state agencies or entities are not able to apply for VAI Grant funding.
- 11) Are the applications public record?**
- a) All submitted applications could be requested through a public information request or Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request.
- 12) Can tour operators apply for a grant?**
- a) Depending on how you define a tour operator, they may. Every situation and organization is a little different, so be sure to read the grant guidelines carefully.
- 13) Please explain the "matching" concept.**
- a) Matching funds are required for any competitive VAI Grant awards. Matching funds can be cash, in-kind, or third party contributions.
- 14) How do I determine if my entity is eligible for a Visit Arizona Initiative Partnership Grant?**
- a) Review the guidelines and evaluate your entity's role in relation to the production.
- 15) Should I get bids to support related expenses or use prior expense history?**
- a) You can use either recent prior expense history or show bids that support your expenses.
- 16) What should we include in the "Scope of Work" document?**



- a) Your scope of work should include detailed information about the project you are hoping to fund. Depending on the program you are applying for, the budget should be included in the scope of work. Some programs require the budget to be uploaded separately.

**17) May other Arizona state agencies apply for the VAI Grants funding?**

- a) No, Arizona state agencies are not eligible to apply for VAI Grants.

**18) Do we have to create an account with Grants.gov?**

- a) No, you need a DUNS number and a SAM.gov number or proof that you've applied for a Sam account.

**19) Are hotels eligible for any of these grants?**

- a) No, hotels would need to partner with a DMO or other entity for an eligible program.

**20) Are there any administrative surcharge percentages in addition to the grant match?**

- a) No, in-direct costs are not eligible expenses in the VAI Grant Program.

**21) Will the applicant entity have to estimate the economic impact of enhanced programs during the application process or can they submit impact upon completion of the program?**

- a) Depending on the VAI Grant Program the entity applying for this may adjust. As a general rule, the estimated economic impact will need to be included with an entity's application. Upon completion of the project, actual economic impact will also need to be submitted.

**22) Do you require the applicant's organization budget, or just the project budget?**

- a) Application requirements will vary depending on the VAI Grant, so please review the specific guidelines for the grant you are applying.

**23) Is this a reimbursement grant? If so, please explain what that means.**

- a) Review each of the VAI Grant Guidelines to understand how funds will be distributed.

**24) Can funds be used for a capital project that will lead to more tourism to AZ (e.g. to improve our facility such that we could have pre-Broadway shows here, which would bring tourists)?**



- a) Fund use is dependent on the VAI Grant. Review the VAI Grant Guidelines to determine project eligibility.
- 25) If two entities in the same community apply to the same grant program, but their projects are different, does that disqualify them both from their chances of being awarded?**
- a) No, but if community partners are aware that multiple projects are being submitted, they should work together to put forth the most competitive of the projects.
- 26) 2021 is the inaugural year for the non-profit I represent. Can my non-profit apply even though there is no proof of the non-profit being directly impacted?**
- a) Yes, the applying entity can show that the industry was negatively impacted by the pandemic but would need a specific program of work or project it was applying for.
- 27) Can we attract visitors from within AZ or is the only focus from out of state?**
- a) Visitors considered for your economic impact can be from in and/or out of state.
- 28) If a DMO partners with a City, can the match be in kind - as in the cost of their grantwriter's time to write the proposal for the partnership?**
- a) No, the proposal costs are not the same as the project/production costs.
- 29) Are these grants only for those entities in the tourism, travel, and hospitality industries? A municipality would not qualify?**
- a) Yes, these grants are for the tourism industry to bring visitors to our destination and state. Municipalities are not eligible.
- 30) Is the matching funds requirement 1:1 or a lesser ratio?**
- a) Matching funds are required on a 1:1 ratio. For example, if a VAI Grant requires 50% match of a project and the project is \$1,000,000, then AOT would need to see proof of \$500,000 in matching funds.
- 31) Is there a handbook on the guidelines and comprehensive policies etc?**
- a) The guidelines and application for each program will be accessible on [tourism.az.gov/grants](https://tourism.az.gov/grants).
- 32) My last economic impact study was conducted in 2016 for the County Fair. We normally conduct economic impact studies every four years so will it still be valid and accepted, even if it's 5 years old?**



- a) Yes, but we encourage you to consult an economist or an expert in the field to provide newer numbers. The newer and more applicable the data, the better.

**33) Are there character or word limits for responses?**

- a) Yes, Adobe Sign (Online VAI Grant Application) caps responses at 250 words. If your response is longer than 250 words, you can submit a supplemental document with the remaining narrative.

**34) Is it an all or nothing approval? Do we get the dollar amount we requested or is it possible we would be granted a portion of the funds applied for?**

- a) No, the award amount can be adjusted during the VAI Grant review process.

**35) Can the matching funds come from within our company (ie: we fund a portion of the production) and the grant funds the rest...or do the matching funds need to come from outside our company?**

- a) Yes, matching funds can be cash, in-kind or third party contributions.

**36) How soon are the funds received after the application is approved for a grant?**

- a) This is dependent on the VAI Grant.

**\*Please note - Any VAI Grant application with missing required elements will not be considered an eligible application. Refer to the relevant application check-list before submitting.**

**VAI PARTNERSHIP GRANT - Program #1**

**1) What expenditures are allowable under the VAI Partnership Grant?**

- a) Any operational expense directly related to the VAI Partnership Grant will be considered. Ineligible expenses include debt, pension, capital improvements and indirect costs.

**2) Can a DMO or other applicant apply for multiple “productions” under the VAI Partnership Grant to offset host city costs?**

- a) No, a DMO or other applicant can only apply for a VAI Partnership Grant for one production per grant cycle.

**3) What is an expanded production in the context of the VAI Partnership Grant?**

- a) Expanded production can be an increase in the number of attendees, length of the production, or number of local businesses utilized, etc.



- 4) **If awarded under the VAI Partnership Grant, how long does my entity have to expend the funds?**
  - a) All funds must be expended within two years of the award date.
- 5) **Can multiple entities apply for the same production under the VAI Partnership Grant and be awarded?**
  - a) No, multiple entities will not be awarded for the same production under the VAI Partnership Grant.
- 6) **Are Nonprofits eligible for the VAI Partnership Grant?**
  - a) The applicant entity needs to evaluate their role in relation to the production for the VAI Partnership Grant and indicate accordingly on their application.
  - b) Example: If you are a non-profit entity and you have an annual event and you are planning on expanding the event, you could be a “event producer.”
- 7) **Are capital improvements eligible for funding under the Visit Arizona Initiative (VAI) Partnership Grant?**
  - a) No, the VAI Partnership Grant funds are for production and/or marketing use, not capital improvements.
- 8) **My entity has an event that we’ve put on year after year for over 50 years. We were unable to put on the event during COVID, are we eligible for VAI Partnership Grant?**
  - a) Your event needs to either be new or expanded to qualify for the VAI Partnership Grant - this would include number of attendees, numbers of days, or number of local businesses utilized.
- 9) **Are hotels, motels and resorts able to apply for the VAI Grants?**
  - a) No, lodging establishments need to work through their DMO on any VAI Grant requests.
- 10) **I understand shopping centers are considered an eligible event venue/stage entity - is this correct?**
  - a) When considering your eligibility for Grant Program #1 review the eligible applicants list as you are viewing your entity’s role in the production. If you are the producer of the event, then yes you would be eligible.
- 11) **If we created an event series spanning multiple venues, would we apply on one grant or as separate entities?**
  - a) An event series would need to be on one grant.





**12) If a program existed in the past but has been discontinued and we want to bring it back, would that be eligible?**

- a) Yes, but the program needs to be expanded and proof needs to be included in the grant application. Please refer to the [FAQ doc](#) for the definition of expanded programs.

**13) I see references to both 50% AND 100% grant coverage for Small Scale Productions -- can you please clarify?**

- a) For the 1C Small-scale Productions Program, projects with a total production cost of less than \$1M are eligible for up to 50% of funding. Based on the grant amount awarded, applicants must provide proof of production costs. In this example, a \$1M production could be eligible for 50% of funding or \$500K. AOT would need to see proof of the other 50% of the production costs.

**14) We are developing a new festival for 2023. If at the end of the day the festival is not viable despite all our planning or if it needs to push beyond the 2-year window to be viable are there accommodations to changes to the scope of work?**

- a) If VAI Grant Funds are not used within the award time frame, they will need to be returned to AOT.

**15) In the application, what does "Is the production secured through a contract?" mean? Is that in reference to government contracts, or just that there is a contractual obligation to perform the production in question?**

- a) If an entity is applying for the VAI Partnership Grant and there's a secured contract for the production, that should be uploaded with the application.

**16) Would vendor fees be considered matching funds for festivals?**

- a) Yes, if those vendor fees are paid by the entity as part of putting on the festival.

**17) Can grant dollars be used for hosting convention client destination showcasing opportunities?**

- a) No, hosting convention client destination showcasing opportunities is not a fundable expense under VAI.

**18) We have a "new" event that we planned to start in 2020 that was cancelled due to COVID and we were going to use the event to apply for funds for grant #1.**

- a) Yes, a new event would be an eligible production under VAI Partnership Grant.

**19) Would a new museum exhibit be funded under the partnership grant?**



- a) Yes, If it can demonstrate driving tourism economic impact and being unique to Arizona as a draw.

**20) We put on a long running event that was canceled due to COVID. We are planning on bringing the event back in 2022, would we be eligible for the VAI Partnership Grant?**

- a) The event would be eligible if the event was expanded.

### **VAI MARKETING GRANT - Program #2**

**1) If I currently have tactics submitted in the Prop 302 Program with AOT, may I apply to expand those tactics under the VAI Marketing Grant?**

- a) Yes, you may expand current marketing tactics under the VAI Marketing Grant, but the expanded tactics need to reach new markets, new mediums, etc.

**2) Are familiarization (FAM) tours/trips an eligible expense under the VAI Marketing Grant?**

- a) No, FAM tours/trips are not an eligible expense under the VAI Marketing Grant.

**3) My community is working on designating a specific entity as our DMO - do we need to have AOT's DMO Affidavit completed in order to apply for the VAI Marketing Grant?**

- a) Yes, only designated DMOs and regional partnerships would be eligible to apply. If you need information on DMO designation please visit [tourism.az.gov/destination-marketing-organizations/](https://tourism.az.gov/destination-marketing-organizations/)

**4) If we are paying for a program in Prop 302 (ex: Expedia), can we apply for a different program from the same vendor with grant dollars?**

- a) Yes. If your entity plans on applying for a tactic that's also in Prop 302, just ensure that the tactic is expanded with the vendor.

**5) Can a DMO (private, non-profit) partner with a City entity (i.e. an airport) for use of these funds?**

- a) Yes, the DMO would be the applicant and they can mention their partnership with the airport in the scope of work.

**6) Can the funds be used to cover agency and/or production expenses?**

- a) If the agency expenses are related to the marketing tactics in the application, yes.





- 7) For the VAI Program 2 Marketing Grant, may I apply as my entity AND as part of a regional partnership?**
- a) Yes, your entity can be the applicant in the VAI Marketing Grant as the DMO and mentioned as a partner of the regional partnership in another, but your entity could not be the applicant in the regional partnership grant.
- 8) How long does the process take to become a DMO and are the process steps on your website?**
- a) The DMO Affidavit definition and process can be found [HERE](#).
- 9) We are creating a multi-city directory website and mobile app to promote our local businesses, stores, recreation activities, hotels, etc. Would that be eligible for the Marketing Grant?**
- a) Yes, if it can demonstrate harm from the pandemic and positive economic impact the project would have on the industry and community.
- 10) You mentioned synergy. Can a few entities in a destination area (some for-profit and some non-profit) get together to apply?**
- a) Yes, but a designated Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) needs to be the applicant.
- 11) If you are marketing your community and businesses in an unincorporated town, can part of the project scope include design, build and install entry signs?**
- a) No, capital improvement projects are not eligible under the VAI Marketing Grant.
- 12) Could a non-profit partner with a DMO on a Marketing grant AND also qualify to apply for a different project in the Outdoor Recreation grant?**
- a) Yes, but the DMO would need to be the applicant on the VAI Marketing Grant and the non-profit listed as a partner in the application.
- 13) Can event sponsorships be part of VAI Program 2 scope of work? Can you provide more definition of event sponsorships?**
- a) Yes, event sponsorships are an eligible expense under the VAI Marketing Grant. The event sponsorship needs to be marketing focused and the application needs to have back-up upon submission, like a draft event sponsorship contract or agreement.

**VAI OUTDOOR REC REVITALIZATION GRANT - Program #3A**



- 1) **Can the VAI Outdoor Rec Revitalization Grant be available to trails on federal land?**
  - a) No, federal entities are not able to receive VAI Grant funding.
- 2) **Can an entity apply for both a 3A and a 3B award?**
  - a) No, an entity cannot apply for both 3A and 3B. If a golf course is eligible for 3B it needs to apply under 3B.

#### **VAI LEGACY GOLF COURSE REVITALIZATION GRANT - Program #3B**

- 1) **Do golf courses apply on their own for the VAI Legacy Golf Course Grant?**
  - a) Yes, golf courses would apply for that grant on their own.
- 2) **Can a community apply for the Legacy Golf Course grant on behalf of a golf course in their community?**
  - a) No, only eligible golf courses can apply for the Legacy Golf Course grant.

**ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS? Send us an email at [Grants@Tourism.AZ.Gov](mailto:Grants@Tourism.AZ.Gov)**